



UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Congresswoman Betty McCollum
Statement for the Record

Veto Override vote on H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act
July 19, 2006

Betty McCollum
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Ms. McCOLLUM: Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this effort to override the President's veto of H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important legislation, which expands stem cell research and ensures that the federal government can implement ethical guidelines.

This bill will provide hope and opportunity for millions of Americans suffering from chronic and life threatening health conditions. This legislation will also ensure that the federal government can implement ethical guidelines over federally-funded research, which will help to set high standards for all research. To be clear, H.R. 810 only allows federal funding for embryonic stem cell research in cases where the cells were created for fertility treatment and will otherwise be discarded.

The expansion of funding to stem cell research has the power to make a real difference in the lives of Americans. Stem cells offer remarkable potential contributions to medical science and improve the lives of millions of people who suffer from incurable diseases such as juvenile diabetes, Alzheimers's, Parkinson's, AIDS, and spinal cord injuries. It may also help us to understand abnormal cell growth that occurs in cancer, as well as change the way we develop drugs and test them for safety and potential efficacy.

It is imperative that we move our health care policy in a new direction and support efforts to improve the *quality* of life. This research is supported by 72 percent of Americans and the majority of the Congress. H.R. 810 is supported by over 200 patient groups, universities, and scientific societies, and has been endorsed by more than 75 national and local newspapers and eighty Nobel Laureates.

For President Bush to use his first veto to ignore this overwhelming support for stem cell research and at the same time extinguish the hopes of millions for cures to chronic and dangerous diseases is an outrage. This veto has made it clear that President Bush has chosen radical ideology over American lives. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting to override this misguided veto.